Pre Assessment Policy

March 2004

Trust Policy Forum – March 2004

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This policy supercedes all previous issues.
GATESHEAD HEALTH NHS TRUST

Pre Assessment Policy
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1. Introduction

This is the Pre Assessment Policy for Gateshead Health NHS Trust. This document has been developed in consultation with all key stakeholders and supports the Patient Access/Waiting List Policy. The document has been prepared in the light of good practice guidance from the Modernisation Agency and NICE, including:

- Tackling Cancelled Operations
  - (available from: http:www.modern.nhs.uk)
- National Good Practice Guidance on Pre operative Assessment for in patient Surgery
- National Good Practice Guidance on Pre operative Assessment for Day Surgery
  - (both available from: www.modern.nhs.uk)
- Pre Operative Assessment – Setting a Standard through Learning
  - a booklet and CD ROM (University of Southampton)

2. Trust Commitment

The Trust wishes to provide a patient centred, user friendly, streamlined pre assessment service, which is seen as part of the out patient pathway thereby reducing the need for multiple visits to secondary care (See Appendix A). The Trust is committed to offering pre assessment on the day of the out patient appointment with a view to agreeing with the patient a convenient date and time for that investigation/procedure in line with the National Booking Programme: Access, Booking and Choice. All appointments for the Pre Assessment Service must be booked onto the Trust IT system in a timely and accurate manner.

The Trust is committed to developing telephone pre assessment for those patients undergoing identified procedures, eg planned or repeat endoscopic procedures or who have direct access/open access to services.
3. Aims

The aim of this health community is to ensure that all patients:

- are at their optimal level of health
- have appropriate and user friendly information
- give informed consent
- have continuity of care using care pathways
- are prepared both psychologically and physically for their procedure

A more detailed description of aims and objectives can be found at Appendix B.

4. Policy Purpose

- Describes the plan for developing nurse led pre assessment
- Ensures a whole system approach from outpatient attendance to discharge following an elective investigation/procedure
- Links to the Patient Access Policy

5. National and Local Priorities

The Government, as part of the NHS Plan and associated documents plans to reduce the number of patients of NHS waiting lists, to make the reductions sustainable and raise standards and improve performance throughout the whole of the NHS.

The Trust has developed this commitment further to encompass the Model of Excellence (MoE). The MoE is intended to completely transform the patient experience by providing immediate access to high quality emergency care at all times and by minimising outpatient waits to two weeks, except by patient choice. No patient will wait more than three months by 2005 for inpatient
elective care. Pre assessment and booking are seen as integral to this process.

The Trust is committed to developing a nurse/Allied Health Professional led pre assessment service with appropriate specialist input according to clinical need anaesthetic protocols and with standardised documentation to support a care pathway.

6. Training and Development

The minimum grade for staff involved in pre assessment will be E Grade.

If anaesthetic assessment is a requirement of pre-assessment for that particular service, then heart and lung assessment will be required along with blood/ECG assessment. Based upon the interpretation of these results, appropriate action will be taken, eg, refer to a Clinician and initiate action on the Clinician’s instructions. These additional assessments and interpretation of results will be reflected in the job description and will warrant a higher grading of the post (eg, F Grade).

Similarly, additional responsibilities may be added to the generic pre-assessment job description and graded accordingly and appropriately, as per the requirements of the Directorate.

Individual Directorates will ensure that pre assessment staff are trained in line with NICE guidance which includes:

- Understanding Blood Results
- Understanding ECG Results
- IT training
- Heart and Lung Assessment
- X-ray Awareness Training
- Awareness of the Pre Operative and Assessment Booklet and CD Rom
A Health Care Professional is responsible for identifying the procedure required for the patient.

The Pre-assessment Nurse is responsible for:

- Taking a targeted history from the patient and carrying out the appropriate tests required prior to a procedure as set out in NICE Guidelines for Pre-operative Assessment.
- Offer the patient verbal and written information regarding their procedure to allow informed consent. Prepare patients for discharge by ensuring that they are provided with all relevant information.
- Refer patients who fall outside the agreed criteria to an anaesthetist, or other relevant Consultant who may then make further referrals.
- Refer a patient back to primary care to optimise the patient’s medical condition.
- Liaise with the Anaesthetic department and other members of the MDT/Departments as appropriate.
- Take responsibility for all communication with the patient throughout their pre-procedure journey.
- Arrange and co-ordinate any assessment and/or investigations needed nearer to the time of the patient’s procedure.

The patient:
It is the responsibility of the Pre Assessment nurse to request that the patient informs the relevant pre assessment service immediately if they:

- Want to change the date of their procedure
- Experience a significant change in their general health
- Have minor illness that will not resolve by the date of their procedure
- Decide not to go ahead with the procedure

It is then the responsibility of the Pre Assessment nurse to inform the relevant secretary/department of the changes in a patient status.

8. Monitoring and review

Monitoring the effectiveness and implementation of the Pre Assessment Policy together with the roles and responsibilities of each individual Service Manager. The Director of Nursing will maintain the organisational overview and accountability for the delivery of a unified standard of preoperative assessment.

Procedures will be reviewed annually or in relation to changing circumstances, service provision or in the light of national guidance.

The pre assessment service, either in isolation or as part of a wider pathway (eg out patients to day case or elective admission and discharge) will be surveyed using an agreed patient satisfaction survey on a six monthly basis. The survey will be undertaken with the Modernisation Team and fed back to the Directorate. Directorates must feedback any changes implemented as a result of areas highlighted for improvement in line with the requirements for Clinical Audit.
Pre assessment flow chart following an out patient attendance

Appendix A

Out Patient Attendance → Health Care Professional identifies procedure/investigation is required → Patient requested to go to identified area to undergo pre assessment → Patient details added to PAS → Patient undergoes pre assessment → Complications

Patient leaves with appropriate information and date for procedure → Patient agrees date for procedure → Patient is referred to the appropriate health professional to optimise health

Problem solved/solvable – agree date → Problem unresolvable – refer back to GP
Appendix B

to Pre Assessment Policy
Aims and Objectives of Pre Assessment

Provide the patient with opportunity for further explanation and discussion of the information given by the surgeon.

Assess the patient’s fitness for a procedure and possible anaesthesia and provide an assessment of the risks and benefits of the proposed procedure and confirm the patient’s wishes to proceed in the light of these risks and benefits.

To provide a more responsive service to patients by assessing them directly from out patients clinics

To facilitate early identification of any health problems likely to prevent a procedure being carried out

To maximise patient choice

Identify any cultural requirements and any communication or other special needs

Provide an opportunity to discuss with patients any self help matters to improve the outcome of their procedure, eg, stop smoking, losing weight, etc

Refer the patient, if necessary, for optimisation of their health before a procedure, for example to primary care or a secondary care specialist.

Ensure any necessary investigations are performed according to NICE Guidelines, results are available and any necessary action taken

Assess the patient’s suitability for day surgery or as an in-patient.

Identify any condition that may require intervention prior to admission and procedure and take appropriate action, for example, patients taking warfarin, oral contraception, etc

Assess the home support available to the patient post discharge, and identify any special requirements to facilitate prompt discharge, for example social services where appropriate

Provide a contact point for any further queries, or if they wish to cancel their procedure

Prepare the multi-disciplinary pre-admission assessment documentation

Provide verbal and comprehensive written documentation to the patient
Ensuring patients are aware that they need to bring their own medications in the original containers in sufficient quantity to last the expected duration of stay.
Appendix C
Generic Outline for Pre Assessment Posts

Gateshead Health NHS Trust
Job Description

JOB DETAILS:

Job Title: Pre-Assessment Nurse

Grade: E

Hours:

Location:

Responsible to: Service Manager

Professionally Accountable to: Service Manager

JOB SUMMARY

The post holder is responsible for providing effective Pre-Assessment Service and Booked Admission service for investigations and procedures

JOB PURPOSE

To work as a member of the pre-assessment team
To assist in setting up pre-assessment at the time of outpatient appointments
To liaise closely with the Department of Anaesthesia
To support the provision of education training of nursing staff

DIMENSIONS

To provide a robust and flexible Pre-Assessment screening service.
This will encompass:

ECG recording
Venepuncture
History taking-protocol based to identify level of fitness for investigation/procedure
X-ray requesting
Referring to appropriate disciplines e.g. GPs, Anaesthetists and Specialist Nurse
Preparation of patient documentation
Ordering tests and Investigations
To set and monitor standard of patient care in accordance with NICE guidelines
To participate in audit projects
To undertake training to facilitate the future development of Heart and Lung Assessment
Book Admissions and the ability to use PAS effectively.

ORGANISATION CHART

Clinical Director

Director of Nursing     Consultant Staff

Service Manager

Clinical Leader

Departmental G Grade

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Essential
1st Level Registration
Excellent interpersonal skills
Teaching Certificate City and Guilds 730/ENB 998
18 months experience at D Grade
Organisational skills
Evidence of ongoing Professional Development
Working as a member of a multidisciplinary team

Desirable
Working towards Diploma or Degree in health related subject
Experience in Pre-Assessment
IT skills
Research
Audit
Recent clinical experience relevant to area of work

Key Links

Service Manager/Clinical Lead
Other wards and departments
Consultants/GPs/Anaesthetist
Nurse Practitioners
Administrative and Clerical staff
Junior Medical Staff
Primary Care Staff
Director of Nursing
Deputy Director of Nursing
Health Care Professionals (MDT)

MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB

To plan, co-ordinate and implement a comprehensive pre-assessment service to all patients, identifying the patient’s journey and offering a seamless pathway.

KEY RESULT AREAS

1. To plan, co-ordinate and implement pre-assessment clinics appropriate to service needs.

2. Perform clinical pre-assessment on patients who require a Diagnostic procedure/investigation identified by Medical staff.

3. Liase with other professionals within the Multidisciplinary team ensuring continuity of patient care.

4. To take on responsibility and accountability for the day to day running of a busy pre-assessment clinic.

5. To adhere to all Trust Policies and Procedures and the requirements to meet the demands of Trust Clinical Governance.

6. To provide a safe environment to patients and staff in accordance to the Health and Safety at Work Act.

7. To support and promote an integrated approach to quality, which will include health promotion and education.

8. To provide clinical expertise and advice to other staff and facilitate training and development to the Multidisciplinary team.
9. To assist in developing a learning environment for both trained and untrained staff within the Multidisciplinary Team.

10. Assist and participate in Audit and Research pertaining to this speciality within the ethical policies of the Trust and initiate changes as appropriate.

11. Maintain accurate patient records.

12. To participate and support the modernisation of the Pre-Assessment service

13. Book appointments for procedures/surgery to meet the requirements of a Booked Admissions service, using electronic booking systems as appropriate, eg, PAS.
Gateshead Health NHS Trust
Job Description

JOB DETAILS:

Job Title: Pre-Assessment Nurse

Grade: F

Hours:

Location:

Responsible to: Service Manager

Professionally Accountable to: Service Manager

JOB SUMMARY

The post holder is responsible for providing effective Pre-operative assessment and Booked Admission service for all elective surgical patients.

JOB PURPOSE

To work as a member of the pre-assessment team
To assist in setting up pre-assessment at the time of outpatient appointments
To liaise closely with the Department of Anaesthesia
To support the provision of education training of nursing staff

DIMENSIONS

To provide a robust and flexible Pre-operative assessment screening service to elective surgical patients.
This will encompass:
Heart and Lung assessment
ECG recording
Venepuncture
History taking-protocol based to identify level of fitness for surgery
X-ray requesting
Referring to appropriate disciplines e.g. GPs, Anaesthetists and Specialist Nurse
Spirometry recording
Preparation of patient documentation (elective admission, blood forms etc)
Ordering tests and Investigations e.g. Echoes  
To set and monitor standard of patient care in accordance with NICE guidelines  
To participate in audit projects  
Book Admissions and ability to use PAS effectively.

ORGANISATION CHART

Clinical Director

Director of Nursing  Consultant Staff

Service Manager

Clinical Leader

F Grade Surgical Nurse Practitioner

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Essential  
1st level registration  
Excellent interpersonal skills  
Teaching Certificate City and Guilds 730/ENB 998  
3 years post registration experience  
2 years experience at E Grade  
Organisational skills  
Diploma or Degree in health related subject  
Management skills  
Evidence of ongoing Professional Development  
Working as a member of a multidisciplinary team

Desirable  
IT skills  
Experience in Pre-Assessment  
Management Certificate  
Research  
Audit  
Recent clinical experience relevant to area of work

Key Links  
Service Manager/Clinical Lead  
Other wards and departments  
Consultants/GPs/Anaesthetist  
Nurse Practitioners
Administrative and Clerical staff
Junior Medical Staff
Primary Care Staff
Director of Nursing
Deputy Director of Nursing
Health Care Professionals (MDT)

MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB

To plan, co-ordinate and implement a comprehensive pre-operative assessment service to all elective surgical patients identifying the patient’s journey and offering a seamless transition from admission to discharge.

KEY RESULT AREAS

13. To plan, co-ordinate and implement pre-operative assessment clinics appropriate to service needs.

14. Perform clinical pre-operative assessment on patients who require a surgical procedure identified by Medical staff.

15. Liaise with other professionals within the Multidisciplinary team ensuring continuity of patient care.

16. To take on responsibility and accountability for the day to day running of a busy pre-assessment clinic.

17. To adhere to all Trust Policies and Procedures and the requirements to meet the demands of Trust Clinical Governance.

18. To provide a safe environment to patients and staff in accordance to the Health and Safety at Work Act.

19. To support and promote an integrated approach to quality, which will include health promotion and education.

20. To provide clinical expertise and advice to other staff and facilitate training and development to the Multidisciplinary team.

21. To assist in developing a learning environment for both trained and untrained staff within the Multidisciplinary Team.

22. Assist and participate in Audit and Research pertaining to this speciality within the ethical policies of the Trust and initiate changes as appropriate.
23. Maintain accurate patient records.

24. To take responsibility for the management and supervision of junior staff

13. To participate and support the modernisation of the Pre-Assessment Service.

14. Book appointments for procedures/surgery to meet the requirements of a Booked Admission service, using electronic booking systems as appropriate, eg, PAS.